

Testimony of Anne Goulet  
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House Regulatory Reform Committee

Hello and Good Morning. I would first like to thank everyone for coming today and giving me this opportunity for sharing my story.

My name is Anne Goulet. I am 22 years old and a recent college graduate from Central Michigan University, where I majored in Communication and Journalism. I lead the typical post-grad life, moving back into my parent's house, starting my first "big girl" job, and spending time with family and friends. Yet my life could have taken a very different turn due to my tanning addiction.

The first time I walked into a tanning salon was my freshmen year of high school, I was fifteen years. I had just wanted a little glow for my high school's homecoming dance, plus everyone else was doing it, so how bad it could be? Just after a few sessions, I could already see how much tanner I was looking and all my friends were giving me compliments on how good I looked.

After a few sessions I soon became addicted to the ultra-violet lights of the tanning bed and I couldn't get enough of it. Every day after school, I would immediately get in my car and drive to the tanning salon. Nothing could stand between me and those 20-minute sessions in the strongest beds they had. I had officially become an addict.

And like most addicts tanning to me was more than getting a nice glow, it was also the feeling I got the minute I laid in the bed and machine came on. No matter how stressed I was feeling with my life at that moment, I automatically calmed down in there. It was almost as if tanning was fixing all my other problems, while causing an even bigger one.

Sure I know there was risk involved with my constant use of the tanning beds, but I just didn't care. Like most teenage girls, I thought that it would never happen to me until it did.

In August 2010, my four years of constant tanning use finally caught up to me. I went into Doctor Watnick's office for an appointment and that is when she found a funny looking mole on my lower right abdomen. She removed the mole and sent it over to the lab to have it tested. I really didn't think too much about it until three days later when I got a call from her and she was diagnosing me with melanoma. She explained that this is the deadliest type of skin cancer and I would need to have surgery to remove it completely. I was just nineteen years old.

Within the next month I became a patient at the University of Michigan Cancer Center, where I had surgery to completely remove the melanoma and cancerous skin cells. After the surgery I was cancer free, but my life changed completely.

Unlike most girls my age, I don't spend hot summer days laying out in the sun trying to get the perfect tan, but rather slathering on the SPF 50 and sitting in the shade, I now have to visit Doctor Watnick every six month for full body check-ups. But the biggest reminder that my tanning addiction left me with is the 3-inch scar that is across my lower right.

Even though I was diagnosed with this deadly disease, I believe I am one of the lucky ones. Skin cancer is becoming the number one killer of young women, taking a life every hour. And let me tell you, those tanning sessions aren't worth it. It isn't worth risking your whole life to just be tan.

I believe with these bills, which will stop minors from using indoor tanning beds we can stop this deadly disease from taking another loved one. Thank you very much and I hope that my story opens your eyes to how truly dangerous indoor tanning beds are.

